

Behind the Grin of the Peanut Farmer from Georgia

By Sally Quinn

Relax, Eastern Establishment. Jimmy Carter's OK. He's not crazy. He's just Southern.

He may not wow the gang at Elaine's or the Georgetown salons, and he's not necessarily someone you'd choose to hang out with. But he's not weird, hypnotic, or mystical. He doesn't incite mobs like Hitler or Mussolini; he's no Jesus Freak, Holy Roller, Snake Handler or Moonie; he's not a diehard conservative nor is he a flaming liberal. He's no fraud or phony or papier mache who'll blow away at the mere suggestion of anything substantial. He's not chic, not hip, not with it, not cool. And he's not too good to be true.

So, alright he's a terrible square.

Tell him so and he bursts out laughing in delighted surprise. "To a person like me," he says, "that's a compliment." When Jimmy Carter gets to the White House, and he is convinced he will, he'll go to stock car races and have bucking dances (a more primitive form of square dancing). He'll eat grits, Brunswick stew and collard greens. He'll go to the local Baptist Church on Sunday mornings and he'll read a chapter of the Bible each night.

At the same time, he'll listen to Tristan and Isolde and read Reinhold Niebuhr and Dylan Thomas. He'll also listen to his collection of Allman Brothers and Bob Dylan records. He'll watch old W. C. Fields movies and drink scotch, moderately. He may occasionally give his wife Rosalynn an affectionate pat on the derriere in front of his friends or have an occasional disagreement with her just as openly. He'll be ruthless with his opponents and enemies; he'll exhibit enormous discipline and little patience with those who don't.

It's only March, too early for conclusive judgments, but five days out on the Democratic primary trail with the "Guvnah," as his staffers call him, help explain the Carter phenomenon.

Jimmy Carter has been campaigning all day in North Carolina, shaking every hand there was to shake, kissing a lot of ladies, patting a lot of kids on the head, remembering a lot of names and looking directly, intensely into a lot of eyes. Only those who look closely can see that the warmth is more physical than emotional; that the toothy mandatory politician's smile which has become an object of ridicule in some quarters is not always natural.

Carter makes his way back toward the middle of the chartered campaign plane, the first one aboard. He sits down alone in a seat. Most of the press look pretty rumped by now. Not Carter. His styled hair is perfectly in place,

his understated dark suit uncreased, his tie knot neatly in place. He slumps down in his seat, puts one leg up in a totally relaxed position and begins to talk. One doesn't chat with Jimmy Carter. Almost at once the conversation becomes significant. Nothing about the weather. He wants to know what's going on, what the press thinks, what Washington is like. He enjoys hearing that political types are bewildered by him and don't know what to think. It amuses him, delights him that a Georgia peanut farmer whose campaign staff wear peanut T-shirts and peanut lapel buttons could have the Eastern Establishment baffled.

But Jimmy Carter is no dummy. The Southern accent sometimes confuses people from the North, gives them the impression that everyone from the South is slow. One thing Carter knows is that a big religion number just won't fly with some voters who will immediately suspect his piety. He is uncomfortable talking about religion to reporters, lapsing into embarrassed smiles, blushing, even looking away to avoid a cynical gaze. For one thing, he hasn't got his story straight yet. It's the one subject he hasn't got an answer for.

"I wish the subject had never come up," he says. "When one reporter wrote that I was spiritual I knew then that it was going to happen. And this time I haven't had a chance to talk to Rosalynn about it. I just hoped the news media would not pick it up. There is no way I cannot make a misleading statement, or give a false impression."

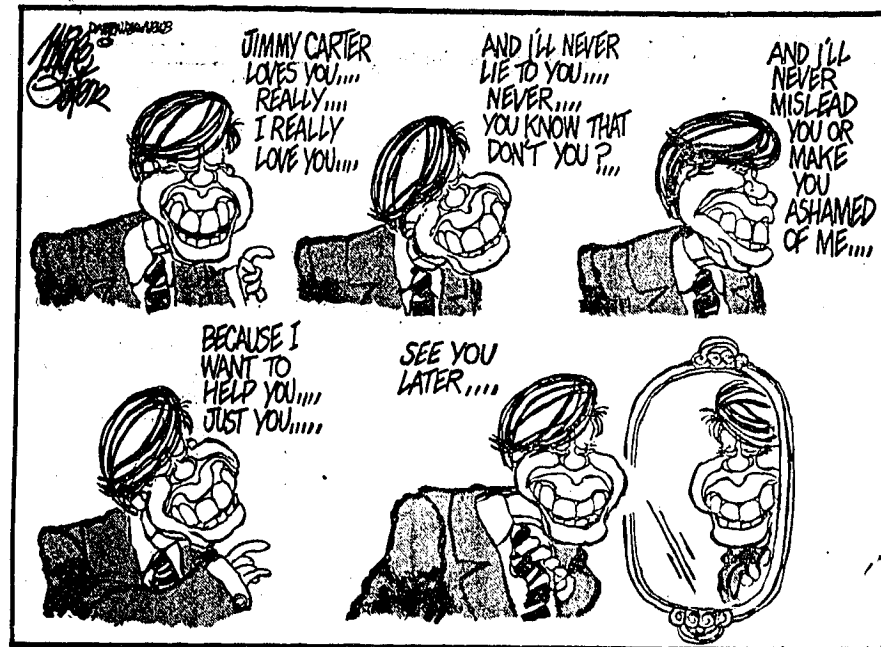
Carter's sister, evangelist Ruth Stapleton, has gained notoriety for reportedly being responsible for an important religious event in his life.

It was with her, a decade ago, that he had what is now called a profound religious experience. He is supposed to have been very emotional. "My sister and I have always been very close," he says. "We went to the farm and walked through the woods together. I hate to dispute what she said," he says hesitantly, "but I was not emotional. At that time I wasn't getting any satisfaction out of any success and when I had failures it was very upsetting. Even the smallest failures seemed like calamities to me. Life had no purpose."

It was that night that his sister tried to persuade him to go into the religious life. He was religious then and had always been, the way many are who grow up in small towns in the South. That "religious experience," he says, happened "in an evolutionary way and not to the exclusion of my secular life. I did (lay) missionary work in Pennsylvania and New York and it was very fulfilling." He seems

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Jimmy Carter:
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Cartoon by Mike Peters—
The Dayton Daily News, UPI Photo

How Can You Beat the System if You Can't Get a Parking Space?

By Art Buchwald

When the new Congress was elected in 1974 there was a great deal of publicity about the young Turks who were going to bring about reform in the legislative branch of government. A few people may have wondered what reforms they produced, and what happened to these tough young men and women who were going to go up against the system.

One, whom I'll call Efreim Haldi, told me. "It wasn't as easy to fight the system as I thought it would be."

"What happened?"

"Well, what we didn't know was

Rep. Wayne Hays of Ohio was in charge of the House Administration Committee."

"What has that got to do with reform?"

Capitol Punishment

"Everything. If you go up against the system you don't get a parking space on the Hill. How can anyone serve the people if he can't park at the Capitol? You may think election reform is very important to this country, but it certainly doesn't have priority over parking."

"So the reason the young Turks

haven't made any inroads in Congress is because if they tried to do anything, they would lose their parking privileges."

"It wasn't just parking privileges. Some of us could have lived with that. But Hays is also in charge of office expenses. If we went up against him we might have found ourselves without pencils. How can you write new reforms if you don't have any pencils?"

"Typewriters?" I suggested.

"Hays is in charge of typewriters too. If he gets mad at you you could wind up with a really lousy typewriter. It's one thing to want to change things in the House, but how

can you do it if you don't have the tools to work with?"

"Hays has you in a box."

"He can put you in one if he wants to. He's in charge of allocating office space. If you're not willing to play the game you can wind up talking to your constituents in the men's room."

"That's tough when the League of Women Voters comes to town," I said. But what are you going to do this election after you promised the people in your district that if you were elected you would bring about much needed reforms in Washington?"

"I'm going to talk about furniture. What I didn't know when I ran in 1974 is that if you didn't become a team

player the oldtimers could really screw you up on getting decent furniture for your office. I know one member of the freshman caucus who stuck to his guns on an issue Wayne Hays was against, and his swivel chair collapsed on him right in the middle of an important committee hearing. He got the message pretty fast."

"Are you trying to tell me that the reason the freshman caucus hasn't been heard from in the past year is because they're afraid Wayne Hays will see they get faulty furniture?"

"Of course not. It's really the stationery problem. You see, he's in charge of how much stationery we get. If he cut down our stationery allotment, all of us would be in serious

trouble. We can sit on rotten chairs with the stuffing coming out of them, but you take away our stationery and we're in serious trouble."

"I can appreciate that."

"He also has to authorize our travel vouchers. No one in this country is going to mess around with someone who authorizes his travel vouchers. That's suicide."

"Well, I'm glad you explained it to me. I thought you had just lost interest in trying to reform the system."

"That's ridiculous. We're as determined as ever to make this body more responsive to the people's needs. But we can't do it unless we have an adequate supply of paper clips."

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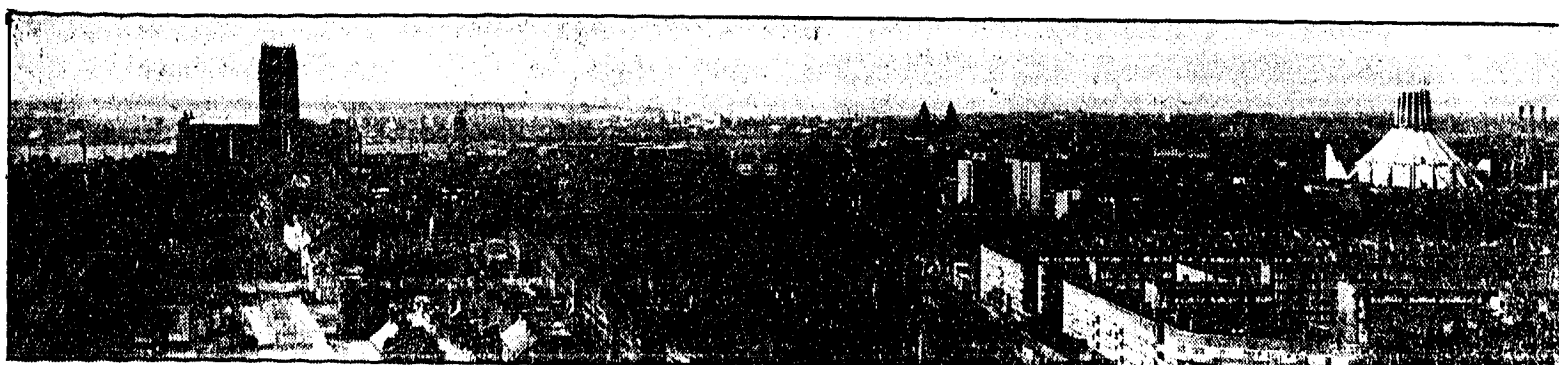
Liverpool: Coming to Grips With the Realities of the 1970s

By Bernard D. Nossiter

LIVERPOOL — "The staircase and passageway were often thronged of a morning with a set of beggarly and piratical-looking scoundrels," the U.S. consul here wrote in the 1850s. "These specimens . . . were shipwrecked crews . . . bruised and bloody wretches . . . drunkards, desperadoes, vagabonds and cheats."

The consul was Nathaniel Hawthorne, who had gotten the post as a political reward for writing a campaign biography of his friend, Franklin Pierce, then the President. Hawthorne spent four years in the grimy old building on the docks, recouping his fortunes, saving the handsome sum of \$30,000 out of the notary fees from which he was paid.

That was 120 years ago and Liverpool was the key transshipment port between the old world and the new. Today, the port is dying. It is no longer a stop for the few transatlantic passenger ships still in service. So the U.S. consulate here, a hand-



some quiet suite in the Cunard Building, will close its doors on May 28.

"I'm sad," said George Peterson, the consul general and Hawthorne's last successor. "I've loved this assignment. It's sad after 186 years that they should close the post. But I guess we have to be realistic."

There is simply not that much for Peterson, a 52-year-old career Foreign

Service officer, and his staff of 11 to do. Planes carry passengers across the Atlantic and Southampton takes the few ships. Liverpool is no longer even Britain's biggest cargo port. Felixstowe on the east coast handles more. In the last 20 years alone, Liverpool's tonnage — excluding oil — has fallen from 12.1 million tons to 8.6 million, a drop of nearly 30 per cent.

Like other cities in Britain, Liverpool is a victim of its early entrance into the industrial revolution. The huge cotton trade in nearby Manchester kept the port humming a century ago; now cotton is woven and spun more cheaply in the third world.

Liverpool, too, is a caricature of the "I'm all right, Jack" labor practices that have crippled some British

industries. The militant dockers here resisted containerization, the packaging change that cuts labor costs, and the disputes drove shippers elsewhere.

This unlovely city, with its smoke-grimed brick, has declined so rapidly that its leading paper, the Liverpool Daily Post, sells more copies in North

Wales than it does inside the metropolitan limits.

There are still some splendid, neo-classical buildings from the turn of the century, including one that looks like a misplaced Parthenon. But more characteristic of the confusion here is a stark, contemporary Catholic cathedral that recalls a pagan Aztec temple.

Hawthorne heartily disliked the place and called it a "black and miserable hole." But at least it had a vitality in his day that enjoyed only a brief revival with the Beatles.

Consul Peterson and his staff have seldom had to worry about the stranded sailors that harassed Hawthorne. "You very rarely have to find money for anyone in this affluent age," he said. "Even the hippies do all right."

Peterson has had to look after the youngsters picked up on drug charges or the tourists who go off on a binge.

"We can't open any jails," he said, "but we use our contacts and the local people are very good." For the most part, he serves errant Americans by

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